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Sunday Afternoons for the People.

THERE is just now a movement amongst the Churches to provide short and bright services on Sunday afternoons, more especially for the benefit of those who, for various reasons, find that season a dull and dreary time, and also for those who do not care to attend the morning and evening services. An afternoon service of the old-fashioned kind is usually a failure; it is a sleepy business altogether, and all concerned are glad when it is over.

A few ministers and clergymen have for some time past recognized the fact that music must be a very important element in these meetings if they are to be attractive, and they have arranged their methods accordingly. The Rev. E. Husband, Incumbent of St. Michael's, Folkestone, has for a long time given monthly services of this kind, and they have always been well attended. We believe the Rev. H. C. Shuttleworth, Rector of St. Nicholas Cole Abbey, has also made his afternoon service largely musical—generally, in fact, giving a sacred cantata, or short oratorio. During last year we reported similar services at several Nonconformist churches both in London and the provinces, and so far as we can ascertain they were all crowded with appreciative congregations.

The London Congregational Union, at their Annual Meeting on the 2nd ult., took the subject into consideration. Mr. John Blackham of West

Bromwich, who has had great experience in inaugurating Sunday afternoon meetings—"Bible Classes," as he calls them—gave a very interesting account of his work. It is, however, noteworthy that he was very particular to point out that he insists upon the address being short, and that the solo singing is found to be one of the greatest attractions: and further that a choir of forty is necessary when the service is held in a church of moderate size. Music, therefore, appears to be the "draw," and a large congregation having been attracted, a short and pithy address is not objected to, but is enjoyed by many who probably derive benefit therefrom.

It would be a good thing if the various denominations would vigorously take up this work in London and the large towns. There must be a large number of young men and women engaged in business houses, who hardly know how to spend the Sunday afternoon, to whom such a service would be a great boon. Many respectable artisans with their families would also gladly avail themselves of the opportunity of hearing good sacred music. For the benefit of such, our church authorities should commence these interesting meetings.

The programme should include two or three well-known hymns, which ought to be sung to popular tunes, solos taken from the oratorios, good anthems by the choir, organ solos, and, if possible, some orchestral music. The address, which should be short, ought to be simple and practical. A service conducted on some such lines as these would, in all probability, be a success; and many thus brought into the church would in course of time attend the regular morning and evening services.

That we may not be misunderstood, it may be well to say that we do not at all suggest that these afternoon meetings should be mere concerts of sacred music. Though we are of opinion that music should be the leading feature, some religious instruction should be combined with it. Music alone would certainly elevate and refine the people, and make their lives brighter; but a short and attractive religious exercise would still further add to the beneficial influence.

ORGANISTS and choirs are frequently greatly discouraged by the want of interest shown in the music of the church by the minister and deacons. We have recently heard of an instance in a northern city. The church possesses a fine organ, but no voluntaries are allowed because one old lady objects to them! Every quarter there is a special collection, and upon that occasion the organist is permitted to play a voluntary because the objector absents herself! Apparently her generosity is equal to her appreciation of music.

THE minister, a well-known man, of course selects the hymns, but we understand he limits his choice to about twenty-five hymns (though the book in use contains over a thousand), and that frequently the same hymn is sung Sunday after Sunday! We are not surprised to learn that

choir practices are unknown, and that the organist never touches his instrument from one Sunday to another. This minister certainly has a good deal to answer for.

WE regret to hear that at an important and popular church in North London the friendly relations hitherto existing between the deacons and choir are in great danger of being broken. We are not at present in possession of the full facts of the case, though from what we can learn the choir seem to have reason on their side. We trust sincerely that the difference may be amicably settled. We may have something further to say in reference to the matter later on.

WE hope many of our readers will make a point of attending the Nonconformist Choir Union Festival at the Crystal Palace on Saturday, June 1, at 4 p.m. The programme is acknowledged to be an attractive one, and the singers will feel greatly encouraged if a large audience assembles to hear them. Tickets from London Bridge or Holborn Viaduct, including admission to the Palace, price 1s. 6d. each, may be had from our office; or we will forward the same by post on receipt of the amount, and a stamped addressed envelope. Tickets may also be had from any choir taking part. As the Union funds will derive some little benefit from the sale of tickets, friends interested in the movement will be rendering help by procuring them as above.

WE have received some excellent tunes in the prize competition we announced last month. We hope next month to publish the one that wins the prize.

THE "Messiah" was performed in many chapels in London and the provinces on Good Friday.

It is as encouraging as it is significant that music takes a prominent place in the arrangements for the May meetings. For instance, one society, in announcing a meeting for 6 o'clock, says a choir will assist in the singing and "give a rendering of Mendelssohn's 'Lauda Sion' at 5.30;" and, in giving particulars of a meeting to be held at 7, no doubt hopes to attract an audience by announcing that "the choir will give a selection of choruses at 6.30." The secretary of another society writes us to know if we can suggest anything that will help to make the annual meeting brighter and more interesting. It is satisfactory to know that the power of music in attracting audiences is thus acknowledged by the various religious societies.

"The Divine Mission of Music."

ON the occasion of the annual service held on behalf of the choir of the Independent Chapel, Grane Road, Haslingden, the Rev. J. Horatio Johnes, pastor, preached on the above subject on Sunday evening, April 14th, before a moderately good congregation. The preacher

selected his theme from the words, "And they ministered . . . with singing" (1 Chronicles vi. 32). In the course of an able dissertation he remarked that music had been manifestly the companion of religion from a very early period until now. The "morning stars sang together"—doubtless a religious hymn. When Jubal "struck the chorded shell" his brethren, so says Dryden, "fell to worship." Though the patriarchs did not appear to have specially affected music, yet Laban affirmed that he could have sent Jacob home "with song, with tabret, and with harp." In the Temple service, especially from the time of David onwards, music had a large place, the organization on its behalf being specific and elaborate. Outside of Palestine, too, the Babylonian heathen worshipped at the sound of the cornet, flute, dulcimer, "and all kinds of music." Music was equally the companion of religion in the Christian Era also. Christ at His birth "summoned music to attend Him here, announcing peace below." Again, "He called her to sweeten that sad supper." Paul and Silas sang as they worshipped in the Philippian prison. Ephesians and Colossians were enjoined to "admonish one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs." Through the ages there had been Ambroses, Gregories, and Luthers, who had taught the Church of Christ to sing, while in the Church of the redeemed on high "Worthy is the Lamb" would be the everlasting song. But was it a mere companionship—pleasant to man, and not forbidden by God—that existed between music and religion? Was music merely associated with religion, by human proclivity in the first instance, and now by this and long established custom? He maintained that music—so far from being a mere companion which religion had incidentally picked up by the way—had a place, a function, a mission distinctly her own, for which she required to make no apology. She was a comrade in service—duly sent from the same heaven, and duly commissioned by the same God. Even Berlioz wrote:—"The mission of music is not to please the ear alone," thus distinctly recognizing that it had a high mission; while the words of the text might be fairly construed as meaning not that singing was an accompaniment of the Temple service, but an integral part of it. Was it not natural and right this should be so? Whence came music? It was not man's invention, any more than America was the creation of Columbus. Men did not build the "scale," God made it; and no unmelodic Wagnerism could unmake it. Men did not decree the essential laws of harmony—they are God's laws. The whole is a Divine gift.

"Thou, Lord, art the Father of music,
Sweet sounds are a whisper from Thee."

Then must this gift like all others be returned to God by being employed in His service.

Music had a Divine mission to fulfil.

I. In fulfilment of this mission, music *provided a suitable dress for holy thought and feeling*. In connection with the service of God, feeling was necessary. Without it we were either hypocrites, or stocks of wood or stone—in neither case worshippers. Feeling in the first instance might be in a chaotic formless state; then it became crystallized into thought; and thought took

the form of words; but it still often required to be clothed in the seemly attire of music. A piece of wet, shapeless, plastic clay, was not a work of art, or a thing to be prized; but the finished figure in perfect form might have a place in the best room in the house. Our best in the best form must be given to God. He required the cedars of Lebanon and the gold of Ophir for the Temple; pure hearts and clean hands for the Temple service. He who made the beautiful required the beautiful from us—virtues, grace in life and character; in the services also of our hearts, our hands, and our lips.

II. Music, too, practically—if not literally and scientifically—*furnished the worshipper with a new faculty.* In effect it enabled him to feel, hear, see, and do what would be otherwise impossible to him. Hardened and battered by the storms and strifes of the week, we had oft little sensitiveness left when we entered the house of God; our sorrow was only half sorrow; our joy was but the ghost of joy. During the prayer the mind wandered; whilst the Scripture was being read at best we only compared the old version with the new, and marked where the differences came in; but the singing of a hymn had oft produced the sob and the tears which nothing else could have called forth. Not infrequently, too, the worshipper might desire to say much to his Heavenly Father which he could only half tell in words. Even the hymn did not express all his feeling and thought. Here music came to his aid, and lent him her more forcible and comprehensive speech.

"It gives plumage to the tardy prayer
That lingers in our lazy, earthly air,
And melts with it to heaven."

How often, also, had it become a channel of inspiration to the worshippers! Just as by the singing of a national song peoples had been set on fire, and revolutions had been the issue; so the singing of certain old hymns had set congregations ablaze. Inspiration for service, for battle, for trial, and even for death had come in through the medium of song. "Sing me a bairn's hymn," said Guthrie often, in his last sickness. Besides, did not music tend to effect ideal union between the worshippers themselves; enabling the congregation to blend together, voice with voice, heart with heart, and spirit with spirit? So also worshippers of different centuries, of different churches, of different schools of religious thought, stood side by side; controversies ceased, differences became forgotten, partition walls vanished. Orthodoxy and heterodoxy stood reverently together; Protestantism and Catholicism shook hands; David, Asaph, Charles Wesley, Isaac Watts, Toplady, Bowring, Faber, and Bonar, all mingled together.

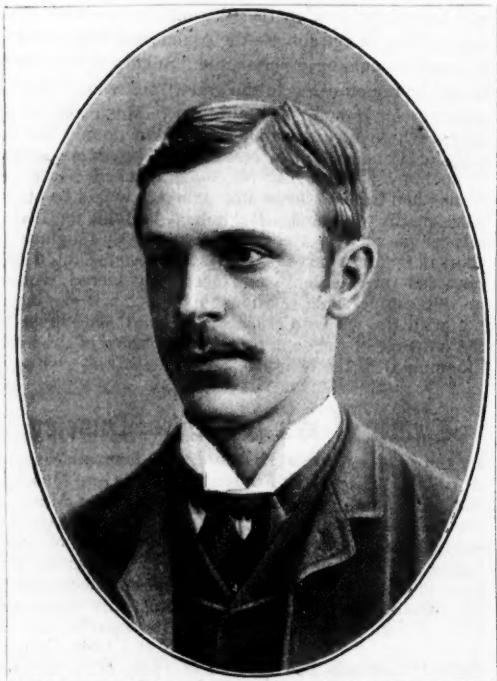
III. Moreover, music *equipped the evangelist* (by which term was meant anyone who taught the evangel of Christ) *with a new instrument.* It oft arrested the thought of the careless hearer, secured a hearing, and prepared a place for the Gospel in the heart. Everything else in the religious service might be speedily forgotten, but the strains of the hymn would yet occasionally haunt the ear and mind from day to day, until finally there was a complete surrender. This power of conserving thoughts, impressions, and truths for future occasions which music had was an invaluable one. In

many instances, the Sunday School frequented to-day would be forsaken, the religious service would be shunned, the Bible would be buried under table ornaments and antimacassars, and much religious thought and knowledge now cherished would be forgotten. But many of the sacred songs—the psalms and hymns learnt in youth—would be imperishable. Sunday School tunes would be remembered to the grave; and who could tell what service they might yet render? Music also found access where all else would find closed doors. As the song of Paul and Silas reached the prisoners, so the Gospel, by the medium of song, reached hearts, in homes and in workshops, from which it would be otherwise rigidly excluded. But music, to fulfil its Divine mission in these ways, must be distinctly religious in character; must be (as a rule) further consecrated and rendered intelligible by alliance with sacred words; must be in personal relationship to us, each singing, if not with lip, yet with grace in the heart; and must be the outcome of the soul, truly the utterance of the inner life, melody of the heart.

Death of Sir F. Gore Ouseley.

BY the sudden death at Hereford from heart-disease, on April 6th, of Canon Sir Frederick Arthur Gore Ouseley, Bart., Precentor of Hereford and Professor of Music at Oxford University, we lose one of our greatest contrapuntists, and by far the finest extempore player of organ fugues in this country. The deceased gentleman was born in London in August, 1825, and he succeeded to the baronetcy on the death, in 1844, of his father, the famous Orientalist and British Ambassador at St. Petersburg. Sir Frederick entered at Christ Church, Oxford, took his B.A. degree in 1846, M.A. in 1849 (when also he was ordained), Mus. Bac. in 1850, and Mus. Doc. in 1854. In the following year, on the death of Sir Henry Rowley Bishop, he was elected to the Oxford professorship. Sir Frederick speedily introduced many much needed reforms. He raised the standard of musical qualifications, instituted an Arts Examination as a necessary preliminary to the degree, induced the authorities to grant degrees *honoris causa*, and restored the office of Choragus. Over the musical life, not only of Oxford but also of Hereford, Sir Frederick Gore Ouseley indeed, for upwards of thirty years, exercised great and beneficent influence, and much of the musical spirit which now exists in the University must be attributed to his authority and example. Sir Frederick's larger compositions—that is to say his oratorios, "St. Polycarp" and "Hagar"—were more remarkable for scholarship than inspiration; but on the other hand he enriched the repertory of Church music with eleven services (one for double choir and one with orchestra) and a large number of anthems; he wrote two organ sonatas and thirty-one organ preludes and fugues; and edited the cathedral services of the old English masters, two volumes of anthems, and the Psalter pointed for chanting. He was also the author of the Oxford treatises on Harmony (three editions), Counterpoint, Canon, and Fugue (two editions), and Musical "Form." Sir Frederick was chief founder of St. Michael's College Tenbury, where, owing to his munificence, a large number of boys have been trained in musical and other knowledge, and in the chapel adjoining which a daily choral service is held by these boys and masters. Sir Frederick was the possessor of one of the finest private musical libraries in the kingdom, it including among other things the Palais Royal collection of old French operas, and the MS. (partly in the composer's writing) of the copy of the "Messiah" from which Handel conducted the first performance of that oratorio.

Music at Trinity Congregational Church, Glasgow.



TRINITY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH bears the reputation of always having been one of the principal places of worship in Scotland. For many years Dr. William Pulsford, well known as an excellent preacher, was the pastor, and carried on a great work. He was succeeded by the present minister, the Rev. John Hunter, formerly of York and Hull; and never during its history has the church been better attended than now. To many this is somewhat surprising, for it is to them a mystery how Scotch people, who are supposed to be so very orthodox, can enjoy the ministrations of Mr. Hunter, who is considered by some to be exceedingly heterodox. It is quite outside our province to seek an explanation; we can only "testify that we have seen," viz. that the church is crowded with a most attentive and evidently appreciative congregation, and that the cause is in all respects in a very flourishing condition.

Mr. Hunter is an eloquent and forcible preacher, but occasionally rather too long. He certainly thinks for himself, and is not afraid to preach what he believes to be true, though to some minds it may not appear so clear. He is acknowledged to be one of the best preachers in Glasgow, and is in great demand for all special occasions, as no other local minister attracts such large congregations.

Trinity Church is a fine structure, with a lofty spire, in the Gothic style. It possesses a peal of bells—the only Dissenting church in Scotland, we understand, that is so rich (?). The interior is comfortably fitted up, and the stained glass windows add much to the beauty. In the "table pew" are

several tall vases filled with ferns and palms. The pulpit, with its entrance from beneath the floor, is very suggestive of a prisoner's dock, especially as it is safely barricaded from the body of the church by high railings. At the opposite end of the building, on a slightly raised platform on the ground floor, is the organ—a good three-manual instrument (by Conacher & Co., of Huddersfield), which is very skilfully and tastefully manipulated by Mr. D. R. Munro (whose likeness we give herewith), a young and rising musician. The choir, consisting of about twelve or sixteen members, five of whom are paid, sing well together and lead the congregation with vigour.

The service is an exceptionally varied one for a Nonconformist church, and might with great advantage be taken as a pattern. Mr. Hunter is a believer in a short liturgy, and has prepared a book of "Services," which are short, but enable the people to take a larger part in the service than is usually the case. This is as it should be. There is a growing desire on the part of congregations that the minister should do less and that they themselves should do more in the service. Mr. Hunter's book of "Services" will be found most useful by churches wishing to adopt a short liturgy, taking up about ten or twelve minutes.

The opening voluntary, a quiet and meditative composition, was beautifully played, during which Mr. Hunter ascended the pulpit. He opened the service by reading several collects, after which "Amen" was sung by the choir and congregation. The first hymn was "God of pity, God of grace," which was sung to *Ambrose*. A good many of the congregation were perfectly mute, though possibly they were making melody in their hearts. Mr. Munro accompanied very softly indeed; a little more self-assertion on his part would have been an improvement, as it would have kept the congregation more together.

A chant was sung to Soaper in 'A, in which the choir showed to great advantage, but the congregation were nowhere. It is significant that the book which was kindly lent us had the accented word in the recitation passages marked in pencil. Apparently it is found necessary to have the accents distinctly marked if anything like satisfactory chanting is to be obtained. At the close of the chant Mr. Munro played a few bars in a subdued tone while the people seated themselves for the succeeding prayer.

The anthem was "Turn Thy face from my sins," and it was treated in a new but pleasing way. The first movement was sung as a tenor solo and then repeated by choir and congregation, and the second movement was sung as a quartet and then also repeated as a full chorus. Unfortunately, one gentleman in the congregation, with a very prominent bass voice, heeded not the solo and quartet, and sang on, we presume, in blissful ignorance of his singularity.

Then followed the Service, or Liturgy (to which we have already referred), which was most expressively read by Mr. Hunter, the choir and congregation singing the responses unaccompanied.

The next hymn was "God is my strong salva-

tion," and the tune *Leven*, or *St. Alphege*, and this was decidedly the best effort on the part of the congregation, for they sang with great heartiness.

The Lord's Prayer was supposed to be intoned by the congregation, as the organ gave the note, but it was mumbled and very indistinct throughout. A simple setting would be found better, unless a much clearer articulation of the words can be got.

At the close of the service the congregation remained standing to receive the Benediction, and as they retired Mr. Munro played in a brilliant manner a very effective voluntary.

We understand that the monthly Communion Service, which in most places is musically very unsatisfactory, is in this church very elaborate. Besides one or two hymns, kyries are sung, and three voluntaries played.

The musical service at Trinity Church is certainly far in advance of anything heard in the average Congregational church. It is refined, and distinctly helpful to true devotion. Its varied character is much liked by the people, and to the younger portion of the congregation it is very attractive. Mr. Munro pays much attention to his work, and is repaid by securing some excellent results.

The Anglican Chant:

Its History, Notation, and Musical Form.

By ORLANDO A. MANSFIELD,
Mus. Bac. T.C.T., F.C.O., L. Mus. T.C.L.

(Continued from page 58.)

THE celebrated Dr. Crotch (1775-1847), who rejoiced in the *sobriquet* of "Tuneful Harry," was the composer of some beautiful Double chants. Among them was that in G ("Bristol Tune Book," No. 299), *per recte et retro* (published 1842?) in which the 3rd and 4th lines are nothing more than the 1st and 2nd reversed. And this without display of pedantry or lack of artistic beauty. Thus the Double chant has not only afforded our native composers an opportunity for the composition of some pleasing melodies and interesting harmonies, but it has actually proved itself capable of becoming the vehicle for the transmission of considerable contrapuntal skill.

The chants of the latter part of the last century showed a considerable departure from the dignified and expressive strains of Morley and Flintoft. By their opponents they have been termed commonplace, trivial, vulgar. Yet they possessed a melodic flow and vigour of which the Gregorian chants could never hope to boast. Perhaps the chief defects in our older chants were excessive compass (Jones in D has a compass of a 12th), and superfluous passing notes. The probable reason of the former defect was, that the chanting of the last century was almost exclusively choral, in fact an exercise in which the congregation seldom took an active part. The modern chant errs on the side of effeminacy, a weakness increased by the abuse of chromatic harmony. This ought surely to be an anomaly in these days of congregational singing.

The chant composers of the 19th century are legion. Since the days of Dr. Crotch scarcely an English Church musician of any reputation whatever but has contributed

to the *répertoire* of the Anglican chant. To mention any names unless they be those of Turle, Goss, and Hopkins, would therefore be an unnecessary task. As the Double chant was posterior to, and twice the length of, the Single chant, so the Quadruple chant was an offshoot from the Double chant, and being twice the length of the latter, was sung to four verses of the Psalm—hence its name. The originator of the form was Michael Maybrick, Organist of St. Peter's Liverpool. In 1825 he published forty-one chants, among which were two Quadruples. One of these, in the key of D, is still popular. The melody is as follows:—



The Quadruple chant was originally intended for the *Te Deum*, for which purpose it is undoubtedly superior to the so-called chant service, generally little better than an incongruous jumble of Single chants. But the Quadruple chant has also been found applicable to some of the longer Psalms. Modern examples of this form have been contributed by Sir J. Goss, Sir Herbert Oakeley, etc.

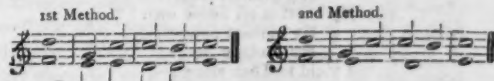
The notation of Anglican chants has varied very considerably at different periods of musical history. The earlier chants were often written entirely without bars. Those in Dr. Boyce's "Cathedral Music" were noted in semibreves. In Thompson's collection, in which Henley in E appeared for the first time, a chant of Dr. Turner in B minor is thus written:—



But even more curious than this five-bar notation is a form of Purcell's chant in A minor, before quoted, as found in an ancient volume in the library of Magdalen College, Oxford. It was written on a six-line staff, and has been thus translated by Sir John Stainer:—



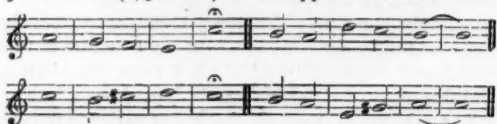
In modern editions some editors indicate as minims the repeated notes which occur in the inside parts. Others replace such repetitions by a semibreve. The following example, from the last four bars of a Double chant in C by Dr. Dupuis, will make this clear.



Many single chants, by the earlier as well as the more modern writers, have been so composed as to be capable of transposition from major to minor, and *vice versa*. Such chants are termed "changeable." Turner in A, quoted above, is an example.

The form of the Anglican chant, as at present written, has given rise to much controversy. Upon examining the structure of an ordinary Single or Double chant we shall find the former to consist of a phrase of seven bars, divided by a double bar into two sections, the first of which contains three and the second four bars. A Double chant will further be found to contain two seven-bar sections, divided in same manner as in the Single chant. In either case this phrase of seven bars is an anomaly—because, in modern music, the usual phrase is one of eight bars, divided into two equal sections of four bars each.

Hence the chant phrase requires another bar. To account for this eliminated bar many theories have been advanced. The most feasible is that of Sir John Stainer, to the effect that the first section should be extended so as to include the second reciting note, and that a prolongation of one bar should be made after the last note of the second section, a thing which in practical performance well-nigh takes place. According to this theory the Double chant in A minor of J. Battishill (1738-1801) would appear as follows:—



The pause indicates the place of the reciting note.

A second theory would interpolate a bar after the first and third reciting notes, thus:—



The late Rev. Sir F. Gore Ouseley would have preferred to regard the seven-bar phrase as an instance of what is termed "overlapping," i.e. when one section begins before another has concluded. Accepting this theory we should have to imagine the chant, when written out in full, to read:—



Another explanation (referred to by Mr. Edwards in his interesting article on Chanting, in THE NONCONFORMIST MUSICAL JOURNAL, May 1888), would regard the two sections of an Anglican chant phrase as the first and third lines of the metre 4.4.6. For instance, in the following hymn of Lyte ("Congregational Hymn Book," No. 168):—

My God, my King,
Thy praise I sing,
My heart is all Thine own:
My highest powers,
My choicest hours,
I yield to Thee alone:—

the first (or second), third, fourth (or fifth), and sixth lines will be found to correspond to the metre of the Double chant as generally written. But this is evidently no explanation at all, and does not remove the difficulty. We cannot here discuss the relative merits and defects of the first three hypotheses. We must content ourselves with their brief description, and leave our readers to adopt the one they think most capable of complete demonstration. Personally, as already implied, we incline to the theory of Stainer, and failing that would fall back upon Ouseley.

Our space will not permit us to say anything about the manner in which Anglican chants have been from time to time performed, nor can we allude here to the various systems of pointing which the present century has produced. Yet if sufficient has been said to show that the Anglican chant has a musical history and an artistic form of such value as to cause it to be regarded as "a thing of beauty" and "a joy for ever," and if sufficient has been said to induce our readers to regard the production and performance of the Anglican chant as a feature peculiar to English Church worship and English Church music, then the primary object of this essay will have been fully and completely attained.

The Wesleyan West Central Mission.

THE standard of excellence to which the musical department of the West Central Mission has been lifted, was strikingly, and to many people surprisingly, exemplified when the season's concerts were brought to a happy, and in every way successful, conclusion. St. James's Hall was engaged, for Princes' Hall is much too small for such an occasion, and a charge was made for admission to every part of the building, the proceeds of the concert being devoted to the funds of the musical department of the Mission. The appearance of the crowded hall was at once a compliment to the performers, and a proof of the enormous influence which music is exerting in the work at the West End. With the exception of some of the front reserved seats the great hall was filled. But the appearance of the orchestra, when occupied by the orchestral band, the military band, the Choral Society, and the choir of little girls, was in itself a revelation to many present, who probably had little idea that Methodists could present such a front to the world. The following details will give a clearer idea of the composition of the various sections represented:—The orchestral band included 70 performers—viz., 20 first violins, 17 second violins, 6 violas, 5 violoncellos, 5 double basses, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarionets, 2 bassoons, 2 cornets, 2 horns, 2 trombones, 1 euphonium, and 3 drums. In the military band there were 18 instruments—viz., 6 clarionets, 3 cornets, 4 horns, 1 baritone, 1 euphonium, 2 basses, and 1 side drum. In the Choral Society there were 87 voices; and the choir of little girls numbered 32.

Of the details of the programme it is unnecessary to say much. Under the vigorous baton of Mr. Heath Mills, both the concerted music and the choruses went with admirable precision and finish.

In the middle of the proceedings, the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes said he was glad to have an opportunity of saying how highly he valued the services of Mr. Heath Mills and the musical department. A series of providential circumstances had given to music a greater prominence in this mission than in any other mission of which he had ever heard. Music should have a place

in every movement that aims at the glory of God, for music promotes and expresses the worship of God. On the highest patriotic and religious grounds music should ever have a very high place in all good work. For this reason he was glad of their co-operation—self-sacrificing, patient, and regular—in his sacred work as a missionary in the West End. It was a unique and novel feature, this magnificent orchestra for the ordinary psalmody, and everybody who attended the services knew how it contributed to their beautiful congregational singing on Sunday evenings. Moreover, this department promoted the beauty of holiness, for music was pre-eminently an aid to the reverence which was characteristic of the highest forms of worship; and, pointing to “the hierarchy of music” ranged behind him, Mr. Hughes added that it also promoted good fellowship and social intercourse. After a reference to the remarkable and widespread influence which the experiment had created in the Methodist Church throughout the country, and the extraordinary development of Church music which had resulted therefrom, Mr. Hughes expressed his thanks *seriatim* to the distinguished professional gentlemen who came to lead the parts, to the amateurs who formed the bulk of the band, to the Choral Society who sing at the Sunday morning services, to the military band, to the little girls, to Miss Bird, the busy musical librarian, and to the stewards. Then came a little episode of personal interest, Mr. Hughes announced that the ladies and gentlemen to whom (in Mr. Heath Mills’s name) he had just been expressing thanks, had requested him, for it was an age of reciprocity, to say something to Mr. Mills on their behalf. And lest there should be any mistake, what he was to say had been written out for him (producing an address written on vellum), and here it was:—“The under-mentioned members of the Musical Department of the West Central Mission, in presenting Mr. Heath Mills with the accompanying gold albert, desire to show their appreciation of the services rendered by him to the Mission during the past season.” This document was signed by members of the orchestra, the military band, the Choral Society, some of the members of the brass band, by sisters from Katherine House, who are in the Society, by the stewards, and by Mr. Hughes himself.

The address and the present were handed over to the Director amid cheers. Mr. Heath Mills, in expressing his thanks, confessed that one of the stewards, just before the concert opened, whispered that Mr. Hughes would specially refer to him in his speech; but to that he replied that Mr. Hughes had so often referred to him in public, and always so kindly, that he should not be very much surprised if he did. He had no idea, however, that Mr. Hughes’s remarks would be accompanied by such a gift.

The Duties and Responsibilities of a Choir.

BY THE EDITOR.

THE value of music as an aid to the worship of God is almost universally acknowledged. Some sects, such as the Roman Catholics, sing very nearly the whole service, while others, such as the Society of Friends, sing very little; but the churches of every creed and every shade of opinion (and they are almost innumerable) make some use of the Divine Art in endeavouring to turn people’s thoughts heavenwards. It is more than probable that a church without music could not exist, for people have a natural desire firmly planted within them

to take some vocal part in the services of the sanctuary. Hence the desire of every church to have good congregational singing. It makes the worship more attractive, and produces religious thoughts and feelings. It touches the heart, and thus prepares it to receive the Word of God from the lips of the minister. It soothes all disquieting thoughts, and inspires a holy enthusiasm which leaves a beneficial effect long after the service is over. The most vivid memories of many souls are bound up with the strains of some sweet psalm, and the best resolutions of many a man have been made under the influence of a tenderly sung hymn.

Ministers are not slow to acknowledge the value of music, not only in assisting to attract congregations for them to preach to, but in influencing their power of preaching. In many cases the spiritual results of a sermon depend very much upon how the hymn immediately preceding it is sung. If it be rendered heartily and earnestly, and with evident feeling on the part of the congregation, the minister is braced up for his work, his soul all aglow, knowing that the hearts of his hearers are open to receive his message. On the other hand, if the singing be dreary and heavy, and altogether lifeless, what a depressing effect it must have upon a man whose soul is wrapped up in his work, and who is longing to preach the gospel with happy effects upon those committed to his charge!

Choirs, and those who in any way take part in the worship-music of the church, have therefore a great responsibility thrown upon them—a responsibility, I am afraid, that is very frequently quite forgotten or overlooked. No one should enter a choir without due thought of the duties and privileges such a membership entails upon them. Persons who are so very delicate in health that they are afraid of going out when it is raining, or even when it is likely to rain! ought never to belong to the choir. Those who will only attend the weekly practice when they have nothing else to do, or when some special music is to be put in rehearsal, ought to occupy a seat amongst the congregation, for such irregular, uncertain, and altogether unsatisfactory members as these do a great amount of injury to a choir. The plea put forward by such people generally is that, as they are not paid they are free to do as they like. Such a plea only makes matters worse. If they undertake to do their part in leading the praise of the sanctuary, are they entitled to do it in a half-hearted, slovenly manner, just as they may feel inclined? Certainly not; if they undertake such a sacred duty, they should feel themselves bound to render the service in the best possible manner. The music of the sanctuary must not be allowed to take its chance any more than the preaching. The minister and organist are always in their places, or provide suitable supplies, and if every member of the choir felt equally bound in honour, the singing in many of our churches would be very much better than it now is. My rule is, to ask all candidates for membership into my choir: “Can you attend regularly twice on Sunday and at the practice on Friday?” If they reply in the affirmative, I test their abilities and decide accordingly. But if there be any hesitation as to something like regular attendance I at once decline their offer, though they may give promise of being in other respects very useful members. If the vocal

worship on Sunday is to be satisfactory, there must of necessity be previous practice; and if any members of the choir absent themselves from that practice without sufficient cause, they thereby neglect to do what they have undertaken to do, and as a result they lack the preparedness to take their proper part in the music of the Sunday services. From what I can learn generally, the most irregular are the people who consider themselves the most competent, and who come in on Sunday and often spoil the effect of the singing, simply because they were not present at the practice, and therefore do not know their part; or, even if they know the actual notes, they do not know what instructions have been given with a view of securing the best effects. From such self-conceited ignoramuses may every choir be delivered.

I would, therefore, endeavour very strongly to impress every choir with the importance and sanctity of their work. It demands diligence and attention if the work is to be properly accomplished; and if we are not prepared to go in for it heart and soul, we had better retire and make way for those who are willing to undertake it earnestly, with a sincere desire to give the best of their ability to the service of God.

(To be continued.)

Nonconformist Choir Union Festival.

REHEARSALS for the festival at the Crystal Palace, on June 1st, will be held as follows, and singers in the respective districts are requested to attend.

MR. MINSHALL'S ENGAGEMENTS.

- May 3rd. Hounslow.
- " 14th. High Wycombe.
- " 17th. Westbourne Park Chapel at 8.30.
- " 20th. Walthamstow.
- " 21st. Finsbury Park, at 7.30.
- " 22nd. Kettering.
- " 28th. The City Temple, at 7.30.

He will also hold rehearsals at Tonbridge, Northampton, Wellingborough, Middlesborough, Enfield, St. Albans, but the dates are not yet fixed.

MR. CROGER'S ENGAGEMENTS.

- May 7th. Christ Church, Westminster Bridge Road.
- " 9th. St. Albans.
- " 14th. Trinity Church, Walthamstow.
- " 17th. Margate.
- " 20th. Stepney Meeting.
- " 21st. Finsbury Park Congregational Church.
- " 27th. Folkestone.
- " 28th. The City Temple, at 7.30.

All the London choirs are expected to attend the full and final rehearsal at the City Temple, on May 28th, at 7.30. As this will be the only united practice, and the whole of the music will be rehearsed, the singers should be in their places by 7.20 at latest.

Inquiry Column.

As previously intimated, we now devote space for the purpose of enabling our readers to procure information upon subjects that come within the scope of the JOURNAL. Questions sent to us shall appear, and we shall be glad to receive replies, which shall appear the following month. We cannot undertake to answer the questions ourselves, the intention being that this column should be devoted to the interchange of opinion. Questions and replies (*written on one side of the paper only*) should reach us not later than the 20th of the month.

QUESTIONS.

(18) HOW TO COMMENCE A TUNE.

I should be glad to know which is the best way to begin a tune for congregational singing. Will some correspondents kindly supply me with information as to their various methods?—F. A.

(19) CHANTING.

Is it proper to observe every comma in chanting? My experience is that to do so occasionally makes the singing very jerky.—V. L.

(20) BACH'S FUGUES.

I am about to commence the organ works of Bach. What edition will be best for me to obtain? I should prefer them in progressive order.—C. J. P.

(21) COMPASS OF VOICES.

In writing psalm tunes what is the compass within which I ought to keep for each voice?—QUERY.

(22) NEW ORGAN.

We are about to get an organ to replace a harmonium. Which is our best way to proceed to get the best instrument for the money at our disposal?—CLERICUS.

ANSWERS.

(13) SINGING OUT OF TUNE.

I WOULD suggest that "P. H." should play the pedals very *staccato* to well mark the time, and play the melody on a solo stop to keep the congregation up to pitch.—C. D.

If "P. H.'s" congregation is a large one very *legato* playing will cause a dragging and a flattening. He should, therefore, avoid too much of that style of accompaniment, and get his choir to sing out well. I have found sustaining the chord at the end of a verse rather longer than usual answers well as a warning to choir and congregation that they are getting out of tune.—ANDANTE.

A difficult matter to remedy, but constant practice by the choir, *unaccompanied*, will do much to gain the desired effect, and if a larger number of the congregation could be induced to attend rehearsal it would be better still.—H. J. H.

(14) THE STUDY OF HARMONY.

Get Stainer's "Harmony," at 2s. from Novello's.—C. J. P.

I believe Messrs. Curwen & Sons publish one or two books on Harmony that are very useful to beginners who are studying alone.—Chester.

(15) HARMONIC FLUTE.

An 8-ft. harmonic flute is the exception rather than the rule. It is much more valued as a 4-ft. stop.—ORGAN BUILDER.

(16) CANTATA.

In answer to "Rustic," I would strongly recommend him to try Pollitt's cantata, "The Better Country." It is easy, and at the same time very effective. I have heard it several times, and on each occasion the audiences have been delighted.—E. H.

[W. E. W. replies, also recommending "The Better Country."]

Gaul's "Ruth," H. Farmer's "Christ and His Soldiers," will be useful to "Rustic."—A. Z.

Shinn's "Captives of Babylon" has been much liked by my choir, and also by the audience when it was performed.—CHOIRMASTER.

The Cantatas by Root, published by the Sunday School Union (Old Bailey) are easy, cheap, and good. "Rustic" will find "Cloud and Sunshine," "The Choicest Gift," and "The Building of the Temple" the best. We have tried them all, with great success.—J.W.S.

(17) HYMN-ANTHEMS.

"Abide with me," by Barnby, is a beautiful anthem if good soprano, tenor, and bass soloists are available. It is published amongst a series by Metzler & Co.—C. F.

"A Choirmaster" should see "Popular Hymns set to Festival Music" (by E. Minshall). They are easy, bright, and popular.—R. S.

Woodward has written one if not more Hymn-Anthems similar to "The Radiant Morn." They are published by Novello, but I forget the titles.—MUSICUS.

Echoes from the Churches.

(Paragraphs for this column should reach us by the 20th of the month.)

METROPOLITAN.

BISHOPSGATE.—The "Pleasant Evening" entertainments held week by week in the schoolroom of Bishopsgate Chapel (Rev. T. Grear, pastor), have been brought to a close. The series has consisted of twenty-three concerts, lectures, and miscellaneous entertainments.

FINSBURY PARK.—At a social meeting of the choir in connection with the Congregational Church, an illuminated address on vellum, and handsomely framed, was presented to Mr. F. W. Ainger, the choir-secretary. The address read as follows:—"The members of the choir hereby wish to express their grateful sense of the efficient and valuable services which Mr. Fred W. Ainger has rendered as their secretary during the past three years. They desire to record their sincere appreciation of his high character, and the unflinching courtesy with which he has hitherto discharged his duties; and they trust that he will long continue to serve them.—Signed on behalf of the choir: A. J. Hawkins, *Organist and Choirmaster*; S. Williams, A. L. Tyler, J. H. New, C. E. Hawkins, H. J. Harris, J. Adams, *Committee*."

HIGHBURY.—A service of song, entitled "Billy Bray," was given in the Schoolroom of the Wesleyan Chapel, Drayton Park, on Good Friday.

KINGSLAND CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.—On Thursday evening, March 28th, a grand ballad concert was given in the large schoolroom of the above-named Church. The artists were: Madame Clara West (soprano); Madame Rich (mezzo); Madame Florence Winn (contralto); Mr. Dalgety Henderson (tenor); Mr. W. G. Forington (baritone); Mr. T. G. Miles (harp); and Mr. Fountain Meen

(pianoforte). All scored successes, there being a large and very appreciative audience.

WESTMINSTER.—A concert of sacred music was given in Westminster Chapel on Good Friday, under the direction of the organist.

PROVINCIAL.

BESSES, NEAR MANCHESTER.—On Sunday the 14th April the Sunday School anniversary services were held in the Congregational Church, the preacher, morning and evening, being the Rev. W. Walker Jubb, of Mossley. In the afternoon, a scholars' service was held, the address being given by Mr. Geo. Crossfield, of Prestwich. Collections were made in aid of the school funds. The following pieces of music were sung, under the direction of Mr. Leaver, the organist and choirmaster. Morning: Introit, "Hear my voice and prayer," Hopkins; anthem, "The Lord is loving," Dr. Garrett; Offertory sentences, Nos. 15 and 18, Edmund Rogers. Afternoon: Introit, "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem," Dr. Leslie. Evening: Introit, "It is ever meet," arranged by Samuel Smith; anthem, "O, clap your hands!" Sir John Stainer; Offertory sentences, Nos. 6 and 7, Edmund Rogers.

BINGLEY.—About a thousand persons were present in the Wesleyan Chapel, on the occasion of a sacred concert for liquidating a debt.

BLACKBURN.—On Tuesday evening, April 9th, a grand organ recital was given in Chapel Street Congregational Church by Mr. J. Kendrick Pyne, the well-known organist of the Town Hall and the Cathedral, Manchester. There was a good audience, who thoroughly appreciated Mr. Pyne's sterling abilities. The programme included Bach's Fantasia and Fugue in G Minor; Handel's first suite in D Major, Guilman's ancient Scotch melody with Lemaigre's carillon for the organ, and other items. To somewhat vary the programme, selections of sacred music were given by the choir, assisted by members of the Nonconformist Choral Union, under the able conductorship of Mr. S. Thornborough. From Rossini's "Stabat Mater," was given the "Eia Mater," Mr. E. Atkinson singing the bass solo. Miss Thornborough sang the soprano air, "Inflamatus" with great effect, her fine voice showing to much advantage in the high notes. Mrs. Knowles (alto), Miss Thornborough (soprano), Mr. J. Higginson (bass), and Mr. Thornborough (tenor), sang the unaccompanied quartette, "Quando Corpus," with fine expression, to the evident satisfaction of the audience. Mr. S. Thornborough also sang "How vain is Man" ("Judas Maccabæus"), with his well-known musicianly taste and ability. Mr. Higginson gave "Revenge! Timotheus cries" ("Alexander's Feast"), whilst the choir rendered the chorus "Be not afraid" from "Elijah." The recital and concert was altogether an unqualified success.—The Saturday night free sacred concerts at Clayton Street Chapel, which were an outcome of a visit to the town of Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, have been so successful that it is intended to continue them next winter.

BUCKINGHAM.—A new organ is to be introduced in the Wesleyan Chapel. It is being built by Mr. F. A. Slater of Bow, upon his patent pneumatic system.

BUNGAY.—A most successful entertainment was given in the Corn Hall by the Congregational Church Choir on Good Friday evening, to a large and appreciative audience. The cantata "Immanuel" was the principal item, while Watson's duet "The wings of the dove," Mendelssohn's "O rest in the Lord," the "Kyrie" from Mozart's "Twelfth Mass,"

a quartet for violin, pianoforte, and harmonium, and three items from "Judas Maccabæus," ending with "Hallelujah, Amen," made up an attractive programme. Mr. H. C. Botwright, the honorary organist of the church, conducted, to whom great praise is due for the treat afforded to lovers of good music.

BURTON-ON-TRENT.—The sixth of the popular services for the people has been held in Victoria Street Chapel, conducted by the Rev. S. Sellars. The subject of the discourse was "How to be comfortable." A string band, with organ accompaniments, played selections of sacred music. These popular services are to be continued during the summer months.

CANTERBURY.—The first choir concert of Watling Street Chapel (Lady Huntingdon's Connexion) took place recently in the Schoolroom. Every item was executed by members of the choir, without any outside assistance. The programme was in two parts—sacred and secular. It comprised six pieces by the full choir, viz.: "The heavens are telling" (Haydn); "Theme sublime" (Handel); "The woods" and "The first day of spring" (Mendelssohn); "Welcome, sweet pleasure" (Weelkes); and "Now the curfew bell hath ceased" (Kreutzer). The solos were: "There is a green hill" (Gounod); "His sceptre is the rod of righteousness" (Handel); "Laddie" (Pinsuti); "Scenes that are brightest" (Wallace); "Rage, thou angry storm!" (Benedict); and "In the chimney corner" (Cowen). There were also a duet, "The Lord is a man of war" (Handel); a trio, "Hearts feel that love thee" (Mendelssohn); a quartet, "Comrades in arms" (Adam); and a quintet, "When winds breathe soft" (Webbe). The quintet and three of the choral pieces were unaccompanied; the accompaniments to the other items being divided between Miss E. E. Dunk (organist) and Mr. Charles Taylor (choirmaster). The concert was well attended and much appreciated; it was evident that all the performers took a great interest in their work, and had well practised their parts. The choir numbers thirty voices. During the evening the Rev. D. Thomas presented to Mr. Taylor, on behalf of the choir and congregation, a handsome dressing-case and purse of gold, as a token of their appreciation of his services.—The new "Congregational Hymnal" has been successfully used in this church for the past fifteen months.

CHELMSFORD.—A new organ, just erected in the London Road Congregational Chapel, was formally opened with a recital given by Mr. G. E. Hedges, the able organist of that place of worship. It has been well built by Mr. A. Kirkland, who utilized what was good of the former organ, thus saving considerable expense in the matter of material and workmanship. The organ consists of 3 manuals, 33 stops, and 1,652 pipes, and is said to be one of the finest organs in the county of Essex, with a variety, a brilliancy, and a depth of tone suitable to the production of any work composed for the king of instruments. There was a crowded congregation to hear the opening recital by Mr. Hedges, whose programme consisted of compositions by Morandi, Haydn, Lemmens, Capocci, Krebs and Mendelssohn, all of which were admirably performed. Vocal music was contributed by Miss B. Copland, Miss Pertwee, Mr. F. Jefferys, Mr. G. E. Wigley, and Miss K. Parker.

CLITHEROE.—A new organ, costing £200, has been opened in the Blacko Primitive Methodist Chapel.

DOWLAIS.—A musical festival for the Baptist Churches of Dowlais and Pen-y-ddaren has been held

at Caersalem Chapel. There were crowded gatherings, and some of the hymns had to be repeated. Mr. Dan Davies acted throughout as conductor.

GLASGOW.—The members of the Whiteinch Free Church Musical Association gave their first concert to a large and appreciative audience in the church on March 26th., the pastor, Rev. John Coutts, M.A., presiding. The work undertaken was the oratorio "God with us," by J. Eliot Trowbridge. We believe this was the first time the work was given in the west of Scotland, and, though the effort was an ambitious one for a young association (being its first year) we were pleased to say it did not suffer on that account, as the choruses throughout were sung in a very intelligent manner, attention being paid to expression, while the phrasing was also pretty good. We have seldom seen a young association pay such attention to the conductor's baton, which was sufficient to infuse the requisite spirit to the work, and to make the precision neat and effective. The principal soloists were: Miss Blane, soprano; Miss Bella Blane, contralto; Messrs. Alexander White, tenor (Hillhead Parish Church); Thomas Hunter and Hervey, bass; who each did their parts effectively, singing with much taste and expression. Mr. John Conner (Organist of Plantation Parish Church) presided at the harmonium, adding much to the enjoyment of the evening's programme by his very effective accompaniments, while Mr. Frederick G. Hervey wielded the baton.

HALIFAX.—At Square School, on Thursday, April 4, a number of scholars, in character, presented the cantata, "Red Riding Hood," before a large audience. About twenty of the scholars were attired to represent a Swiss Choir.

HELSTON.—At the United Methodist Free Church, where a new organ has been recently erected, an organ recital and concert has been given by Mr. R. Clemens, R.A.M., and a select party of friends from Redruth.

HUDDERSFIELD.—The annual choir concert in connection with Brunswick Chapel, has been held, and proved, as usual, a success. During the evening the choir rendered Macfarren's cantata "The May Queen."

HULL.—On Thursday, March 28th, at the Hesse Road Congregational Church, the choir, assisted by a few musical friends, very tastefully rendered the cantata entitled "Cloud and Sunshine." The principal parts were taken by Miss Wheeler (soprano); Miss Delacey (contralto); Messrs. Russell and Burgoyne (tenors); Messrs. Whitaker and Lamb (bass). The loud applause which followed each piece testified to the manner in which they were sung, especially one chorus that was set apart for the children. Mr. Duncan, the organist, was the accompanist, his sympathetic and masterly style of playing the organ being greatly appreciated.

LEAMINGTON.—A most successful organ recital conducted by the organist, Mr. A. E. Maisey, was given on Monday night, April 1st, at Dale Street Wesleyan Chapel, by Mr. Walter Spinney, assisted by his pupil Miss L. G. Clarke. Mr. Spinney's interesting selection of music included a Barcarolle by Sterndale Bennett, Chopin's grand "Marche Funèbre," a State March in C, and "Songs of the Night" (his own compositions), and an arrangement of "The Lost Chord," and "I know that my Redeemer liveth" ("Messiah"). It is almost needless to say that of all these items Mr. Spinney gave a perfectly worthy interpretation. Miss Clark sang "The Better Land," "O, that Thou hadst hearkened"

("Prodigal Son"), and "There is a green hill"—all gems among sacred music—with a feeling and artistic taste that always distinguish her performances. Mr. J. Fellows, who has a good baritone voice, was successful in his rendering of Gounod's matchless song, "Nazareth;" and Miss L. G. Clarke, Miss Berwick, Mr. Woollatt, and Mr. Maisey sang with the best effect Sterndale Bennett's beautiful quartette, "God is a Spirit." There was a large congregation.

MANCHESTER.—At the Culcheth Choir Festival, the new cantata, "The Better Country," by Mr. T. Pollitt, Conference Precentor, was rendered for the third time under the direction of the composer. The Rev. J. Benson gave an address on "Music."

MERTHYR.—A singing festival has been held at Zoar Chapel, in which eight choirs united. There were three services, Dr. Joseph Parry being conductor. The singing was of an exceedingly high order.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.—The Sunday Afternoon Musical Services at Brunswick Chapel, came to a very successful termination on Sunday, March 31st. Before half-past two, the time for commencing the concluding service, the grand old building was crammed to the very doors; vestry, communion, aisles, and pulpit-stairs—every inch of standing room was occupied; and not only did scores contentedly stand throughout the service, but hundreds were unable to get admission. The service began with the "Dead March" from "Saul," followed by Rivière's grand "March of Heroes," and the introduction to Rossini's "Stabat Mater," by the orchestral band. Then the vast audience rose and sang, with full band and organ accompaniment, "Jesu, Lover of my soul." After prayer the Rev. R. Bevan Shepherd gave an address, in which he reviewed the venture in hopeful, grateful, and amusing terms. The ominous forebodings of timid saints were playfully described, and the speaker ventured to claim that their action in holding such services would prove a step in the onward march of the church's action in respect of (a) Music; (b) the purposes of a church edifice; and (c) the scope of the Gospel message. The Brunswick Chapel choir then rendered the chorus, "For unto us" ("Messiah"), and after another hymn, "Nearer, my God, to Thee," the Rev. G. Talalun Newton spoke. He announced that £14 were required to clear off all expenses. The collection amounted to £14 6s. 6d. And so, to the deep regret of many, the series of musical services ended.

NEWPORT, MON.—On Thursday, March 21st, Mr. H. F. Nicholls, organist of Victoria Road Church, gave his annual concert at the Royal Albert Hall, when the following artistes took part: Madame Williams-Penn, Miss Hettie Phillips, Mr. Richard Richards, Mr. Lawford Huxtable (Bristol); violin, Mr. Ernest Willey; violoncello, Mr. E. H. Willey. A novelty in the programme were three piano quartets, played on two pianos by the Misses Grove and Willey and Messrs Batchelor and Nicholls. Madame Penn was well received in the song, "A world between" (Cowen), and in Gounod's "Serenade" (with violin obligato) was enthusiastically encored. Mr. Lawford Huxtable received encores for both of his songs, "The Rover," composed by himself, and "The Skippers of St. Ives" (Roedel), and made a very good impression upon the audience. Mr. Willey's violin solo, "Il Trovatore," was very finely executed; and the two trios, "Memory" and "Gipsy Laughing Trio," received a warm reception from the audience, the latter being re-demanded.

OSSETT.—A meeting was recently held to celebrate the extinction of the debt on the new organ placed in the Congregational Church (Rev. G. Sadley, pastor). The treasurer's statement showed that the total expenditure on the organ reached the large sum of £1,004 8s. 2d. A deficiency of £20 being noted, more than that amount was subscribed at the meeting.

OXFORD.—A special meeting of the choir of New Road Chapel, for the adoption of rules, etc., took place recently. After a short practice an adjournment was made to the vestry, where refreshments were served, after which, the pastor, who presided, explained that the rules he was about to submit to the meeting must be sanctioned by the members themselves. He then put each rule separately, and they were all carried without opposition.—Mr. F. H. Alden then addressed the meeting. He tendered his hearty thanks—on his own account, and on behalf of the choir—to Mr. Wiblin, the organist and conductor, for the care and patience he had bestowed upon them, and also for the excellent manner in which he always rendered the music; but the choir wished at this time to give him some more practical demonstration of their thanks, and he asked him, in the name of the choir, to accept the present they had purchased for him (Novello's Collection of Anthems, in fifteen volumes).—Mr. Wiblin, who on rising was received with hearty applause, expressed his great surprise at the unexpected pleasure. He did not know how to thank them sufficiently, but he tendered his best thanks for the kindness shown him. He should value the present all his life. They could not have made him a more suitable gift. He thanked the choir too for their hearty support; and then put before them the higher aspect of their duty as leaders of the song-worship of the congregation, namely, that their one aim should be the glory of God. Proper musical expression would certainly be given if the sentiment of the hymn were carefully studied, and it were sung "with the spirit and the understanding also." On his part he would do his best, and, with a continuation of their cordial support, New Road Choir might still maintain that character of which their friend Mr. F. H. Alden had spoken.

REDDITCH.—An excellent two-manual organ, built by Messrs. Nicholson & Co., of Worcester, has recently been erected in the Wesleyan Chapel. It contains eighteen stops. It was opened by Mr. Battison Haynes.

ROSSENDALE.—The organ at Waterbarn, after undergoing extensive alterations, was re-opened by Mr. Irvine Dearnley. Special sermons were preached by the pastor, Rev. S. R. Aldridge.

RUABON.—On Monday evening, April 1st, at the Congregational Chapel, a concert was held, the first part of which was Hezekiah Butterworth's cantata, "Under the Palms," which was sung by a choir numbering upwards of fifty voices, conducted by Mr. J. W. Ellis, organist and choirmaster of the chapel. The choir was divided into two sections, one of adults and the other of children, and it is pleasing to remark that the juniors rendered their parts in an efficient manner. Mrs. Barnes presided at the piano-forte, and Mr. Felix Rowland at the harmonium. Miss Littlehales (soprano) sang her solos with charming effect, and was loudly applauded. Mr. Everett, who possesses a good tenor voice, rendered the tenor solos in a very artistic style. The choir are fortunate in having such a splendid bass singer as Mr. W. E. Frith. His deep yet musical tones secured him hearty applause. Miss Parry, of Birkenhead, sang

the song, "Never again," and received a cordial welcome. At the end of the first part, during the proceedings, a presentation of a violin and baton was made to the conductor of the choir. Col. J. R. Barnes, in the course of a few well-chosen sentences, made the presentation, which Mr. J. W. Ellis acknowledged in a fitting manner. The first item in the second part of the programme of the concert was Sullivan's "Lost Chord," sung by Miss Littlehales, and which was loudly applauded. Then followed a song in Welsh, sung by Mr. Edwards, who, being encored, sang "True, true till death."

STROUD.—A charming musical programme was presented to a crowded audience at Ebley British Schoolroom on April 2nd. Just an hour was occupied with the cantata, "The Building of the Ship," being Longfellow's poem, or selections from it, set to music by Henry Lahee. The principals were: Mrs. Margetson, Mrs. J. Albin Roberts, Miss Coster, Mr. S. Jacob, and Mr. W. Thomas (Bristol). The instrumental accompaniment was supplied by the following:—First violin, Mr. Alfred Foley; second violin, Mr. A. H. Cox; viola, Mr. F. A. Stevens; 'cello, Mr. C. Bennett; bass, Mr. E. C. Davis; flute, Mr. T. W. Calvert; piano, Mrs. Jones; organ, Mr. E. Jacob. The choruses were given by the Ebley Choral Class and choir. The audience selected some of the members for hearty applause, and general approval was manifested all through. Under Mr. John Jacob's baton the choruses were spiritedly rendered. A short miscellaneous programme followed the cantata. It consisted of a vocal duet by Miss Coster and Mr. S. Jacob, songs by Mrs. Margetson, Mrs. Roberts, and Mr. Thomas, a violin solo by Mr. Foley (who never fails to get a hearty welcome at an Ebley concert), and finished with a glee by the choir.

SUTTON COLDFIELD.—On March 27th Mr. W. C. Perkins, organist of the Birmingham City Hall, gave an organ recital in the Congregational Church before a large audience. After a hymn, and prayer by the Rev. J. Shillito, the following programme was performed:—Toccata and fugue in C major, Bach; adagio in B flat, Spohr; fantasia on the "Sicilian Mariner's Hymn," Lux; minuet and trio, Sterndale Bennett; song, "Help me to pray," Tosti (sung by Miss Hathaway); toccata, Dubois; canzonetta, Mendelssohn; Schiller March, Meyerbeer. The recital was a great treat. A collection was made in aid of the additional stops in the organ.

TOWYN.—A united musical festival was held here and was attended by large congregations. Six schools united in the service of praise, which was led by Dr. J. Parry, of Cardiff.

WITHINGTON.—A large audience assembled in the Congregational Church on April 17th, to hear George Shinn's oratorio "The Captives of Babylon" given by the choir. The soloists were: Mrs. Workman, soprano; Mrs. Murray, contralto; Messrs. Neill and Buss, tenors; and Messrs. Cochran and Whiteley, bass. Mrs. Murray's singing of "A voice was heard in Ramah," and Mr. Cochran's "Sanctify yourselves, ye priests and Levites," merit special praise. Mr. Neill's rendering of "Belshazzar reigns," and Mr. Buss's "Rend your hearts" drew forth hearty applause. Mrs. Workman did full justice to the part assigned to her. The choruses were given with that finish which we are accustomed to expect from this choir. Mr. J. R. Dearden, hon. organist conducted, and Mr. C. A. Workman presided at the organ.

YARMOUTH.—Rev. Allan Rees's Service of Song illustrative of old Methodist times has been rendered

in two parts at Brunswick Chapel. On both occasions the chapel was full. Rev. W. Willans gave a connective lecture with suitable reminiscences and incidents.

Correspondence.

(We shall be glad to receive communications from any of our readers on questions likely to be of general interest.)

WANT OF REVERENCE IN CHAPELS.

To the Editor of THE NONCONFORMIST MUSICAL JOURNAL.

SIR,—I have held an appointment in a Nonconformist church for many years, and have often been impressed with the great difference in the deportment of the worshippers as compared, say, with those who attend the churches of the Establishment. There seems, to me, to be a lack of reverence. I notice this, very frequently, in the manner of entering the church and in the attitudes adopted during prayer. A circumstance has come to my knowledge this week which bears upon this subject.

An eminent organist has lately visited the neighbourhood in which I reside, and amongst other places gave a recital in a large Nonconformist church. He is unusually gifted as an improviser, and generally extemporizes upon a couple of given themes, as part of his programme. A friend of mine, who was present on the occasion referred to, told me that three themes were given, two of which were "The Harmonious Blacksmith" and "We won't go home till morning." The line of good taste, or reverence, must be drawn somewhere, and I think many of the audience must have been rather surprised on hearing such a theme as No. 2 played in church, even on a weeknight. The person who suggested it must surely have forgotten where he was at the time. Applause, in the way of clapping of hands, was also largely indulged in. I have never experienced such a thing in Established churches, and I have visited many under similar circumstances.

I remember hearing two organ recitals a few years ago in the above church. On the first occasion, applause was freely indulged in; but on the second I noticed a footnote on the programme requesting the audience to abstain from it. The pastor called our attention to the subject, and said that they had ascertained that the act of applauding on the former occasion was not in harmony with the feelings of some of the friends, but for his own part he had not the slightest objection to it—there was no harm done in any way. He said he, on such occasions, regarded the building in which we were assembled (i.e. the church) as simply bricks and mortar, and there was no need for any restrictions under the circumstances. I was painfully surprised on hearing such remarks from the pulpit, and I always think of it with regret. Personally I don't see why an organ recital in church cannot be conducted in a manner perfectly suited to the place, without outraging good taste by introducing such phrases as "We won't go home till morning." Could the introducer not remember a line of a hymn tune, or a passage from an anthem or oratorio? How much better it would have been to have kept the improvisation within the line of "Church music," so as to leave the least possible margin for objectionable associations.—Yours,

ONWARD.

SHOULD THE ORGANIST BE CHOIR-MASTER?

To the Editor of THE NONCONFORMIST MUSICAL JOURNAL.

SIR,—This is an interesting point, and I should be glad to see what can be said on both sides of the

question. My opinion is that the organist certainly ought to be choirmaster, because he has the most to do in the proper rendering of the music. Suppose, for instance, the choirmaster instructs his choir to sing a certain verse slower, or more softly, than the others and the organist does not agree with this idea. The result probably would be that the organist would play as he thought proper, and unless the choir ignore the wishes of the choirmaster the singing would be all "sixes and sevens." "No man can serve two masters," so there ought not to be two masters to serve.—Yours truly,

F. G. L.

To the Editor of THE NONCONFORMIST MUSICAL JOURNAL.

SIR,—As a child I was taught that I could not do two things at the same time. The truth of this has been apparent to me all through life. In my view, therefore, it is not possible for any person to be both organist and choirmaster if the duties are to be efficiently performed. An organ takes, or should take, the whole attention of the player. How can he therefore detect all the little errors in the singing? A choirmaster can instruct his choir and lead them in the singing, and thus the burden of the music rests on two people's shoulders instead of one, and ought, therefore, to be so much the better.—Yours, etc.,

DUÁL.

To the Editor of THE NONCONFORMIST MUSICAL JOURNAL.

SIR,—In several of our churches here (including the two cathedrals, where the choirs are very large) the separate appointments of organist and choirmaster seem the only way of carrying on the choir work, but I think, where it can be at all managed, it is much better that the organist should be choirmaster as well. In all our other churches (both town and country) the combined appointment is now made, and is found to be much more satisfactory in every way. "Church Secretary" would do well to make a combined appointment, and I am sure he will find the work will progress with more harmony than it might otherwise do.—Yours faithfully,

YOUNG ORGANIST.

EDINBURGH.

To the Editor of THE NONCONFORMIST MUSICAL JOURNAL.

SIR,—I have been collecting evidence on this subject lately, and would see it fully discussed, but, I think when the appointments of organist and choirmaster are divided, the latter should be the more experienced and skilful musician of the two.

This is not generally the case in our Nonconformist churches. The choirmaster usually owes his position (often voluntary) to the fact of his having been leader of singing in the days before there was an instrument in the church, his influence with the deacons or trustees, or his social position in the congregation, and the general good opinion of his personal abilities and knowledge of music; but seldom from proved musical qualification.

When things go well, these people take the credit; when badly, it is the indifferent organ-playing. This sometimes causes friction, and friction is better avoided in musical authority, if possible.

One man holding the combined offices guarantees a unity of opinion on all matters requiring his decision. The responsibility for efficiency cannot be shifted.

Again, I think there is a higher standard of musical taste among organists than choirmasters. The musical requirements of a Nonconformist church are not, as a rule, so heavy but what they can be met by one man, and where the offices are paid ones, a far more capable musician will offer himself for the combined posts and salary than could be expected were they divided.

More could be said, and will I hope, for it is a subject deserving of more attention than is generally given to it.—Yours truly,

ITINERANT.

NEW MILFORD.

FROM SUNDAY SCHOOL TO CHOIR.

To the Editor of THE NONCONFORMIST MUSICAL JOURNAL.

DEAR SIR,—With the letter from Mr. Wright I largely agree, as I have had a very similar experience, and I have always found it necessary to have a preparation class for the choir. But the strong denunciation by him of all music published at "8d. per 100" copies is, I think, very severe. If he will take the trouble to look over the leaflets again, he will find some remarkably good things for Sunday School purposes, and some by the ablest writers of the present as well as of the past.

The question, "What is good music for Sunday Schools?" is a very difficult one to answer, and I have always thought that organists (who are organists *only*) are of all men the least able to judge. What is the chief point to aim at? Is it effect, or is it variety of chords? Is it difficulty, or is it simplicity? Is it harmony, or is it melody? It must be remembered that we are dealing very largely with young children, and to introduce a great number of accidentals and changes of key—which in many cases only show the ability of the writer—is a mistake. We must also remember that not only are the children incapable of understanding such tunes, but it is almost impossible to have the parts taken by the teachers and elder scholars with anything like credit, and I verily believe that where such tunes are introduced the congregational singing is a failure. We need to take care and avoid extremes; a tune for school purpose should at all times have a pleasing air, and should always avoid a mere vamping in tenor and bass; at the same time it should possess such variety as will make it interesting and not difficult. Sunday School singing has always been a difficulty from a musical standpoint, and during my twenty years' experience as choirmaster and school singing-master, I have chosen those tunes only which have a good melody as being the best, and I have discarded scores of tunes which have been considered good by many people, because of their lack of melody, although for organ practice, or for an efficient choir, such tunes may be all right. Wishing your JOURNAL every success,

Yours very truly,

THOMAS POLLITT.

684, Oldham Road,
NEWTON HEATH.

Reviews.

The Gospel in Song. A Hymnal for Mission and Revival Services. (The Sunday School Union, 56, Old Bailey, E.C. 1s.) This book, comprising 251 hymns, will be found useful by evangelists and others. We, however, question the wisdom of placing together all the hymns to be sung to one tune, as the numbers are very confusing. We must also protest against the arrangement of Boylston. If the tune is used at all, the original harmonies should certainly be adopted.

Immanuel. An Oratorio composed by Wm. Spark, Mus. Doc. (J. Heywood, Manchester. 4s.) This is the second part, but is complete in itself, or may be performed in conjunction with Part I., issued a short time ago. The words have been compiled by Dr. E. R. Conder, of Leeds. This is certainly Dr. Spark's best effort in vocal music. The work contains thirty items. Several of the choruses are exceedingly effective, especially "Hosanna to the Son of David," and "Lord, save us, we perish!" The solos are flowing and graceful. The whole is within the capabilities of a fairly good Church choir.

The Organist's Quarterly Journal. Part lxxxii. (Novello & Co., Berners Street, W.) The opening

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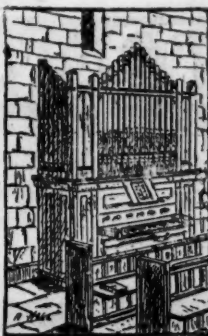
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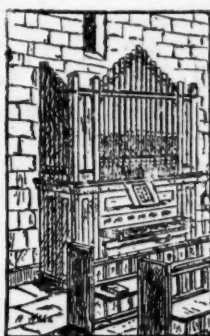
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